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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,166	01/13/2004	Edward B. Keller	UNI29 111	3545

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John M. Johnson
Carter Ledyard & Milburn LLP
2 Wall Street
New York, NY 10005

EXAMINER

MEINECKE DIAZ, SUSANNA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3694

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	03/22/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/757,166

Applicant(s)

KELLER ET AL.

Examiner

Susanna M. Diaz

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 January 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This final Office action is responsive to Applicant's amendment filed January 17, 2007.

Claims 1 and 6 have been amended.

Claims 12-22 have been cancelled.

Claims 1-11 are presented for examination.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-11 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection, which are necessitated by Applicant's claim amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In step e of claim 1, it is not clear which part of step c is referred to by the limitation "whereby c. includes data of both the individuals with a greater probability of influencing others and the individuals without a greater probability of influencing others." Is this data included as part of the answers themselves, the analysis of the answers, as

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part of the determination of which of the individuals in the population have a greater probability than other individuals in the population of influencing choices made by individuals in the population, or does it further define data in another step?

Similarly, step e of claim 1 recites “the data of c. being merged with a plurality of publicly available data elements not present in b.” Again, it is not clear how this data fits into step c. Furthermore, there is no data recited in step b; therefore, the metes and bounds of “data elements not present in b” are infinitesimal. The claimed invention must clearly define the scope of the claim. While negative limitations are permitted in the claims, they must clearly set forth the boundaries of patent protection sought and they must have basis in the specification (see MPEP § 2173.05(i)), which the current limitation fails to do.

Claim 1 also recites “the merged data” and how it is “statistically processed to narrow and flag the merged data to fewer variables...” Does the “merged data” include just the data of c or both the data of c and the plurality of publicly available data elements not present in b? Also, which pieces of data and information qualify as the “data of c”? Step e of claim 1 recites that “c. includes data of both the individuals with a greater probability of influencing others and the individuals without a greater probability of influencing others”; however, step c recites additional types of data, including “answers.” The metes and bounds of both “the data of c.” and “the merged data” are vague and indefinite.

Since, as discussed above, the metes and bounds of “publicly available data elements not present in b.” (claim 1) are unclear, the phrase “an algorithm being derived

that predicts which individuals will have a greater probability of influencing others from the publicly available data elements not present in b.” is equally ambiguous.

Claim 1 also recites “the algorithm being applied to the merged data elements to identify a large percentage of individuals than that of d. from a smaller data population than that of d. that have a greater probability of influencing others.” Are the “merged data elements” the same as the previously recited “merged data”? What is the intended scope of “merged data elements”? Additionally, how are the merged data elements used to identify a larger percentage of individuals than that of d. from a smaller data population than that of d.? It is not clear where the smaller data population comes from or how it is selected? What significance does the smaller data population have in relation to the other recited data populations?

Claim 6 recites the aforementioned limitations; therefore, the same rejections apply.

Dependent claims 2-5 and 7-11 inherit the rejections from the independent claim from which each respectively depends.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

5. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

6. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Under the statutory requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 101, a claimed invention must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. For a claim to be useful, it must yield a result that is specific, substantial, and credible (MPEP § 2107). A concrete result is one that is substantially repeatable, i.e., it produces substantially the same result over and over again (*In re Swartz*, 232 F.3d 862, 864, 56 USPQ2d 1703, 1704 (Fed. Cir. 2000)). In order to be tangible, a claimed invention must set forth a practical application that generates a real-world result, i.e., the claim must be more than a mere abstraction (*Benson*, 409 U.S. at 71-72, 175 USPQ at 676-77). Additionally, a claim may not preempt abstract ideas, laws of nature or natural phenomena nor may a claim preempt every “substantial practical application” of an abstract idea, law of nature or natural phenomena because it would in practical effect be a patent on the judicial exceptions themselves (*Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 71-72 (1972)). (Please refer to the “Interim Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility” for further explanation of the statutory requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 101.)

Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 6 to alter the focus of each claim such that the result of the claimed invention appears to lie in the derivation and application of an algorithm. In light of the numerous rejections asserted under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph, it is not clear what the practical application of the algorithm is. For example, “the algorithm being applied to the merged data elements to identify a larger percentage of individuals than that of d. from a smaller data population than that of d. that have a greater probability of influencing others” does not clearly evoke a result

that is useful, concrete, or tangible; therefore, claims 1-11 are deemed to be non-statutory.

Appropriate correction is required.

Because claims 1-11 are so indefinite, no art rejection is warranted as substantial guesswork would be involved in determining the scope and content of these claims. See In re Steele, 305 F.2d 859, 134 USPQ 292 (CCPA 1962); Ex parte Brummer, 12 USPQ 2d, 1653, 1655 (BdPatApp&Int 1989); and also In re Wilson, 424 F.2d 1382, 165 USPQ 494 (CCPA 1970). Prior art pertinent to the disclosed invention is nevertheless cited and Applicant is reminded they must consider all cited art under Rule 111(c) when amending the claims to conform with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

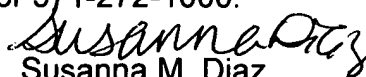
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extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susanna M. Diaz whose telephone number is (571) 272-6733. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on (571) 272-6712. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Susanna M. Diaz
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3694

March 16, 2007